MORTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Kyle L. Kirchmeier, Sheriff

News Release
For Immediate Release
October 27, 2016
Contact: Morton County PIO (701) 426-1587 or (701) 595-3596
Pictures & Video are available at: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzEKNLJqG3cwdlUzdkRUelNQVm8

UPDATE: Law Enforcement Arrest 141 Protesters Thursday

Mandan, N.D. – It was a very active and tense evening as law enforcement worked through the evening to clear protesters from the north camp on private property and to remove the illegal roadblocks protesters established on Highway 1806 and County Road 134.

Officers' actions to remove protesters illegally occupying the private land and roadway was met with violence from the protesters. Protesters threw rocks, logs, bottles and other debris at officers. During the arrest of one woman, she pulled a weapon and fired three rounds at the police line. The woman was arrested.

Protesters started numerous fires during the course of the day. Protesters set fires on Highway 1806, to three pieces of DAPL construction equipment, a bridge on CR 134, the backwater bridge (north of the main camp), and numerous vehicles. The amount of damage to the bridges is unknown at this time.

As the police line moved further south towards the backwater bridge, officers met resistance from protesters. Protesters threw Molotov cocktails (homemade explosives) at law enforcement.

Seven protesters used sleeping dragon devices to attach themselves to items. Three were attached to and under a vehicle, three were encased in concrete, and one released himself.

Authorities arrested 141 protesters Thursday. A majority of the individuals were arrested for conspiracy to endanger by fire/explosion, engaging in a riot and maintaining a public nuisance. The individuals who used sleeping dragons to attach to items were also arrested for reckless endangerment.

As of 12:00 a.m. Friday morning, law enforcement is holding a line north of the backwater bridge.

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There was a separate incident involving gunfire that is under investigation after an incident that also occurred near the backwater bridge. Officers were NOT involved in this shooting.

The operation to remove protesters illegally taking over private property and the roadway started Thursday morning at 11:15. Officers numerous times repeated that the protesters were "free to go". They told protesters they could not continue to trespass and they needed to clear the north camp located on private property and vacate roadblocks they established on Highway 1806 and County Road 134. Protesters were instructed to walk south to the 7 Council fires camp, so they would not be arrested.

Morton County will release more information as it becomes available. Check the Morton County website for prior releases: http://www.co.morton.nd.us/

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